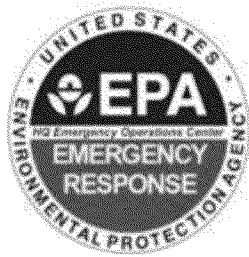


To: Eoc, Epahq[Eoc.Epahq@epa.gov]
From: Eoc, Epahq
Sent: Fri 1/24/2014 9:11:53 PM
Subject: EOC Spot Report: Chemical Spill, Charleston WV – Update #18

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EOC Spot Report: Chemical Spill, Charleston WV – Update #18

US Environmental Protection Agency

Report as of 16:00 January 24, 2014

Overview: On January 10, the President approved an Emergency Declaration for the State of West Virginia after a chemical, 4-methylcyclohexanemethanol, (MCHM) leaked at a Freedom Industries chemical plant and into the Elk River in Charleston, WV. The spill occurred near the Kanawha Valley Water Treatment Plant which detected the chemical even after an increased carbon treatment effort was put in place. Freedom Industries is working to clean up the spill at the facility and in the river.

State, Local and other Federal Agency Actions: West Virginia water authorities issued a “Do Not Use Water Notice” for 10 counties and the President’s Emergency Declaration covers eight counties. West Virginia American Water Company (WVAWC) customers were told not to use tap water for drinking, cooking, washing, or bathing. Water could be used for toilets and fire emergencies. When the incident originally occurred, it contaminated drinking water for 300,000 people. The emergency declaration was closed on 1/20.

On 1/21, Freedom Industries reported to EPA that another material (PPH- a proprietary mixture of polyglycol ethers) was part of the chemical release that occurred on 1/9/14. PPH represented a relatively small percentage (approximately 5%) of the total volume in the tank.

Region 3 reported that drinking water samples collected between January 10 and 16, and on January 22, 2014 were reanalyzed for PPH. All 30 samples were reported as nondetectable for PPH at a detection limit of 2 ppm. Further testing is planned with a detection limit of 1 ppm. In addition, water testing at the WV American Water Treatment Plant indicated no sign of phenol, a by-product that would appear if the PPH had reacted with water treatment processes.

Overnight operations focused on collection of water from outside the containment wall. This water is being pumped into tank 398, tested, and, if acceptable, used for thinning the glycerin for pumping and transport. In addition to the site being frozen, sections of the Elk River are frozen the entire width of the river. The frozen river has caused some concerns in controlling the ice down inside the boom containment. Two options are to leave the ice in place behind the containment boom or to carefully remove the bottom boom and force the ice from behind the containment and reinstall the boom. The facility has asked WVDEP to approve one of the options.

Disposing material at Big Run Landfill in Ashland, KY, was delayed because the sub-freezing temperatures have frozen the water in the holding tank. The facility has requested approval from WVDEP for the disposition of all collected water and approval to use water from the Elk River to dilute the glycerin to aid in pumping of the product.

Senator Manchin was on site late yesterday to discuss the plans for the site. He spoke with the EPA OSCs and the WVDEP.

The Central Regional Lab (CRL) in Ft. Meade, MD has been working to identify analytical techniques for the single compound MCHM in water. The CRL will use several analytical techniques to identify the constituents in the product mixture samples collected from the tanks at Freedom Industries in Poca, WV facility. This material may have different compound ratios than the ruptured tank. CRL also will work to identify the appropriate analytical method(s) for identifying PPH in water and attempt to attain acceptable detection limits for making public health evaluations.

EPA Actions: EPA Region 3 continues to monitor and provide oversight of facility activities at the Freedom Industries tank farm site and the Poca staging facility. EPA continues to coordinate with WVDEP and WVAWC.

Media Interest: High

<http://www.wvgazette.com/News/201401230094>

The HQ EOC will continue to monitor and provided updates as needed.

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